

REMARKS

Claim Status and Affirmation of Election

Claims 1-51 are pending in the present application. Claims 21-24 and 30-51 are withdrawn from consideration.

We affirm our election of claim 1-20 and 25-29 without traverse.

Claim 1 is amended without prejudice by merely introducing elements from the preamble into the body of the claim, which is consistent with our originally intended claim scope. The phrase “the steps of” is also deleted.

Claim 12 is amended without prejudice by reciting that the digital watermark is embedded in the identification document through hidden changes in data representing one or more items carried by the identification document.

Claim 25 is also amended without prejudice by reciting received information carried is separate from the data corresponding to at least the second field.

Claims 5, 9, 13, 17 and 29 are amended without prejudice and merely in an editorial manner. The word “and” has been changed to --or-- in these claims. And claim 16 is amended without prejudice by deleting the terms “the steps of”.

The specification is amended to include patent and publication numbers.

Art-Based Rejection

Claims 1-11 stand rejected as being anticipated by DiMaria (U.S. Patent No. 6,148,091). Claims 12-20 and 25-29 stand rejected as being unpatentable over DiMaria in view of Sehr (U.S. Patent No. 6,999,936).

We respectfully traverse these rejections.

Claim 1 in view of DiMaria.

Claim 1 is amended to include features of the preamble in the body of the claim. (No change in claim scope is intended with this amendment.)

For example, claim 1 recites an act of receiving first digital data corresponding to an age indicator. The first digital data is obtained from auxiliary data steganographically embedded in an identification document. Claim 1 further recites

receiving second digital data corresponding to a biometric indicator. The second digital data is obtained from auxiliary data steganographically embedded in the document.

DiMaria teaches away from the steganographic embedding of claim 1. For example, please see Col. 4, lines 56-60: “The identification document reader 20 reads at least one of the machine readable medium such as the visible machine readable code 14 or the data encoded on the magnetic stripe 16 of identification document 10” (emphasis added).

We respectfully submit that the rejection of claim 1 should be reversed. (We need not explore other deficiencies of DiMaria at this time.)

Claim 12 in view of DiMaria and Sehr.

Claim 12 recites – in combination with other features – decoding the scan data to obtain the first set of information included in the digital watermark, wherein the digital watermark is embedded in the identification document through hidden changes in data representing one or more items carried by the identification document.

DiMaria teaches away from a watermark embedded through hidden changes of data as in claim 12. For example, please see Col. 4, lines 56-60: “The identification document reader 20 reads at least one of the machine readable medium such as the visible machine readable code 14 or the data encoded on the magnetic stripe 16 of identification document 10. . . .” (emphasis added).

Sehr is not understood – nor is it relied on to – remedy at least these deficiencies.

We respectfully submit that the rejection of claim 12 should be reversed. (We need not explore other deficiencies of applied art at this time.)

Claim 18 in view of DiMaria and Sehr.

The Office Action cites the DiMaria patent at Col. 5, lines 12-14 as teaching: “the first set of information comprises two or more random bits.”

We do not read the cited DiMaria passage as teaching such. Instead, the cited passage appears to be a boilerplate statement that other ways of encoding are possible. (“The above examples are intended to be instructive rather than restrictive because there

are many different ways to encode age data and ascertain the actual age of the bearer therefrom.”).

There is no discussion or teaching in this passage of including two or more random bits as a stored portion of a first set of information serving as an audit clue to evidence that an identification document has been examined.

We respectfully submit that this rejection is improper and should be reversed.

Claim 25 in view of DiMaria and Sehr.

Claim 25 recites (in combination with other features) receiving information carried by the document – separate from the data corresponding to at least the second field – and generating a reduced-bit representation of the received information.

So, if the data corresponding to second field is carried by steganographic encoding, the information carried by the document is separate from this steganographic encoding.

The Office Action cites Col. 2, lines 61-65 and Col. 4, lines 56-58 as teaching these features. The cited Col. 2 passage seems to be calculating an age of a bearer based on encoded data. But this passage does not discuss generating a reduced-bit representation of the age data. The cited Col. 4 passage discusses reading a machine readable code, but does not discuss generating a reduced-bit representation of the machine-readable code.

The encoded data (Col. 2) and the machine readable code (Col. 4) also do not seem to be separate from data corresponding to a second field. (Claim 29 provides a few examples of how the received information – which is separate from the data – may be carried.)

Claim 25 also recites plural-bits of steganographically embedded data comprise at least a first field and a second field. Analogous to our discussion above regarding other claims, neither DiMaria nor Sehr teach steganographically embedded data as claimed here.

We respectfully submit that claim 25 should be allowed.

Remaining Claims

We respectfully submit that the remaining claim recite patentable combinations. Reconsideration is requested.

Information Disclosure Statement

An Information Disclosure Statement is filed concurrently herewith. Consideration of the disclosed information is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

We respectfully submit that the application is in condition for allowance. Nevertheless, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at 503-469-4685 if any questions remain.

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Respectfully submitted,

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